As regards the equalising of salaries of the heads of departments, these salaries depend so much upon the particular circumstances of each case such as the amount that has to be offered for getting men with particular qualifications, etc., and I do not think there is much to be gained by generalising.

2. **A fair, equitable and efficient administration of the State Finance.**

Mr. K. Govinda Pillai (Member, Ettumanur Taluk) stated that the announcement made by the Dewan in his opening speech regarding the appointment of a Budget Committee composed of officials and non-officials to participate in the framing of the State Budget and the drafting of a Local Boards Bill rendered it unnecessary for him to dilate upon the obligation resting upon the Government to give due weight and consideration to the representations made by the Members of the Assembly in shaping the financial policy of the Government. He expressed his gratification at the steady improvement of the finances of the State during the past ten years, but pointed out quoting figures how the expenditure was growing at a more rapid pace than revenue. For the future, he said, more funds would be required for the departments which contributed to the moral and material well-being of the people (*e. g.*, P. W. D., Education, Medical and Sanitary, Agricultural and Industries), for the improvement of the pay and prospects of the subordinate services and for carrying out the various reforms referred to by the Dewan in his opening speech. The Member then dealt with the large revenue-yielding departments and observed that land revenue did not seem capable of expansion, as the condition of the average cultivator did not permit of any further addition to his burden. The rise in the excise revenue, he stated, should be regarded as synonymous with increased consumption of liquor and he deplored that Government should be affording every facility for this increase in cosumption. For the moral well-being of the subjects and for saving the country from economic ruin, unrestricted sale of liquor should be suppressed with a strong hand. The Member hoped that Government would not regard the excise revenue as a permanently dependable source of income. As regards the revenue from the Judicial department, he observed that the income from the sale of court fee stamps was considerably greater than the expenditure under 'Law' and 'Justice' and that it was unfair to tax the litigant public more than what was absolutely necessary to meet the cost of the administration of justice. The salaries of Judges and Munsiffs of all ranks as well as of the several subordinates of the department might, therefore, be substantially increased. Courts of Conciliation as in Baroda might be instituted to expand the usefulness of the Panchayat Courts. As regards the forest revenue, the Member observed that it was capable of vast development. He urged that full rights should be granted to the people in respect of royal trees standing on private holdings. If not, a reasonable *kuttikanom* rate on the standing trees of a certain specified growth should be fixed and the same be realised in easy instalments as in the case of *thadivila* in puduval lands, full rights being granted to the land-owners in respect of the future growths of the royal trees. That arrangement would bring in a large revenue for three or four years, which could be used for reproductive works. Besides, it would serve as an inducement to the ryots for planting teak and blackwood on registered areas, thereby eventually adding to the wealth of the State.

He approved of the idea of the Government to appoint a Committee of Ways and Means and to introduce income tax in the State. He also expressed great satisfaction at the intention of the Government to extend the Railway system in the State.

The Member then referred to the question of the separation of the Devaswom from the Land Revenue department and observed that it was necessary to do so with a view to avoid the abnormally increasing expenditure which was being incurred, due to rise in the prices of provisions. He urged that it would be advantageous to create, as in Cochin, Committees or Corporations on a statutory basis to which the management of Devaswoms might be entrusted.

He also observed that the establishment of well organised Ayurvedic hospitals in every taluk would be a means of minimising expenditure and that Ayurvedic medicines could be had at cheaper rates than foreign drugs. He stated that the

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Native Vydiyasalas should be improved and, as a step towards that, a licensing system might be introduced among private practitioners, conditional licenses being given to unqualified Vydians.

Lastly, the Member stated that the Budget allotment should be so distributed that each taluk might have an equitable share of it. Funds might for some time to come be so allotted for the different taluks that the inequality in the sharing of the public funds might be gradually set right.

Dewan's reply.—I do not think the Member is right in saying that Government are creating every facility for increase in liquor consumption. The figures show that we have not created any additional facilities, but consumption is nevertheless going up. I do not think Government are responsible for it. Government are fighting the evil by spreading education. That is the only way in which the Government can fight the problem. It is for the people to reduce consumption of liquor. So long as they would drink, the revenue will also increase. A few shops which were on the list and which had not been sold in the year previous happened to be sold in 1095, and that accounts for the slight increase in the number of toddy shops which Mr. Thanu Pillai has brought to notice. The question of still further reducing the number of shops will be taken up and the Excise Commissioner will be requested to go into the question before the next contract is given.

In regard to the observation that profit is made from the administration of justice, this is a statement which is very often made. I do not see what is exactly meant by the statement that Government are making profit. In order to keep up the activities of the various departments, Government must spend on them the money derived from the revenue-yielding departments.

The question of royal trees is a very important one and has been engaging the attention of Government. We do recognise that interference of the State in private property is apt to be inquisitorial and irritating. It is an unsatisfactory arrangement at the best, but there are very many practical difficulties in the way of satisfactorily solving the problem. It seems to me that the best time for tackling the question is the Re-settlement.

Mr. Govinda Pillai has touched on the question of Devaswom management. You all know that a Committee sat over this question and their report has just reached Government. It is premature to say what changes Government are going to effect as a result of the recommendations of the Committee, as Government have not had the time to consider the report.

As regards Ayurveda, I think the Government are doing all that is possible for the department. In regard to cheapness, I am not sure whether Ayurvedic medicines are really cheaper than allopathic medicines. Dr. Koman says they are not so. Whatever that be, Government have been doing their best for the spread of Ayurvedic medicine in the land.

3. Grievances in the matter of taxation in Travancore.

Mr. Kanakku Kerulan Govindan (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) prefaced his remarks by saying that it was a fundamental principle of taxation in all civilised countries that, before imposing any kind of tax on the people, their capacity measured by their economic condition should be considered and their wishes ascertained or at least their objections, if any, heard. He said that the Government's practice of raising taxes without consulting the people or convincing them of the necessity for the same was objectionable. He remarked that 90 per cent. of the population of the country were agriculturists whose prosperity depended upon a variety of conditions which were of an unsteady and fluctuating character. The scarcity and stress consequent on the European war, the successive failures of paddy cultivation and the devastation of the cocoanut plantations in the country by the cocoanut palm disease, had quite impoverished the ryots. To quote parallels in British India as justification for new taxes was, he said, objectionable, as the economic conditions of the ryots in British India and Travancore were not similar. Continuing, he referred to the rumour that he had heard of the attempt to raise

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